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FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9674  
INFO RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA PRIORITY 0392  
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RUEHJB/AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY 0314  
RUEHLGB/AMEMBASSY KIGALI PRIORITY 0088  
RUEHKI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY 1377  
RUEHLI/AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY 0657  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0341  
RUEHLU/AMEMBASSY LUANDA PRIORITY 0956  
RUEHNJ/AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA PRIORITY 0427  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0883  
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE PRIORITY 0794  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIBREVILLE 000174

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [MCAP](#) [GB](#) [CF](#) [CG](#) [BY](#) [CT](#) [RW](#)  
CM, FR, KPKO  
SUBJECT: FRANCE CONDUCTS ECCAS TRAINING IN GABON; ECCAS  
REQUESTS ACOTA RAINING

REF: A. 2006 YAOUNDE 0519  
[1](#)B. 200 YAOUNDE 01885

Classified By: Ambassador Barrie alkley for reasons 1.4 b and d

1.(U) This message contains an action request in para 6.

[1](#)2. (U) The first military training under the auspices of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS in English, CEEAC in French) has just concluded in Gabon. This initial training of ECCAS units that will eventually be part of the African Union standby force for Central Africa (FOMAC) was conducted by elements of the French 6eme BIMA (the 800-man French battalion based in Libreville). The two-week program (for 35 commandos from Gabon, Congo-Brazzaville, Burundi and Cameroon) involved operating and surviving in a deep-forest environment. The next BIMA training session for CEEAC will take place in August (with troops from Chad, the Central African Republic, Angola and Rwanda).

[1](#)3. (U) According to General Guy Pierre Garcia, the military chief of staff for the standby brigade (whose HQ are in Libreville), ECCAS currently has pledges from member countries for 63% of FOMAC's personnel and materiel needs. These pledges include:  
-- 3 infantry battalions (1 from Angola, 1 from DRC and a mixed battalion with units from Burundi, CAR, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon;  
-- 1 armored battalion from Cameroon;  
-- 1 battalion support unit from Congo-B;  
-- 110 military observers;  
-- 2 squads of "gendarmerie mobile" (Gabon, Congo-B, Cameroon);  
-- 55 civilian police officers (Gabon, Congo-B, Cameroon);  
-- 2 Ilyushin 76 aircraft from Angola;  
-- 3 C-130s (Gabon, Cameroon, Chad);  
-- 1 Boeing troop transport plane from DRC ("not yet available");  
-- 3 ground support helicopters (Angola).

[1](#)4. (U) General Garcia believes that the ECCAS countries have

the will, but not the means, to make the regional brigade a real force (the AU mandate calls for it to be fully operational by 2010). The critical needs are in the areas of interoperability, training and logistical support when deployment occurs.

15. (C) ECCAS believes the latest training being offered by the French BIMA in Libreville to be "a step in the right direction." General Garcia says that past RECAMP exercises with the French have been useful, but have not been tailored directly to ECCAS/FOMAC needs. In a meeting with the Ambassador, Garcia said that ECCAS believes American assistance can be better tailored to ECCAS needs and requested ACOTA training for HQ staff and field units. If ACOTA responds positively, General Garcia said that ECCAS is ready to draw up a two-year training plan with ACOTA personnel.

16. (U) General Garcia said that the ECCAS brigade is in urgent need of communications support similar to the package that the US provided ECOWAS (so that member capitals can communicate with the brigade HQ in Libreville and with each other). ECCAS also seeks US support to establish and stock four humanitarian depots in the field (to include tents, blankets, cooking pots, etc, not food).

17. (C) ACTION REQUEST: Reftels are joint action requests from Embassies Yaounde, Libreville, Ndjamena, Brazzaville, Malabo, and Bangui recommending US support for the ECCAS standby force. Given the latest request made directly by General Garcia, Libreville asks that ACOTA (perhaps in conjunction with EUCOM) send a team to Libreville to meet with ECCAS to determine precisely what assistance might be appropriate and possible.

18. (C) COMMENT: The recent BIMA training of the ECCAS brigade was a modest but important step. It involved only 35 commandos, but it was significant symbolically in signaling the start of this regional military cooperation effort. It also indicated a French desire to have some part at least in the ECCAS brigade's future. FYI: There is a French liaison officer stationed at ECCAS HQ. Jean Marc Simon (the French ambassador in Libreville, who has been in residence for almost four years) recently requested accreditation to ECCAS and last month presented his credentials (becoming apparently the only ambassador in town to take this unusual step and be also accredited to ECCAS). The European Union has provided 4 million euros over three years to help develop ECCAS capacity to protect peace and security in the region.

WALKLEY